# Rezension: Christian Fleck, 2007: Transatlantische Bereicherungen. Zur Erfindung der empirischen Sozialforschung

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Netzwerkanalysen, weniger schön ist die Ausweisung von Nachkommastellen bei Prozenten (S. 161) bei dieser Fallzahl. Aufgrund der Willkür der Stichprobe ist es ohnehin nur mit großen Einschränkungen sinnvoll, Prozentanteile anzugeben.

Eine kritische Besprechung dieses Buchs steht vor dem Problem, dass die einzelnen Studien nur als Beispiel dienen. Studien, die zum Zeitpunkt der Erstellung des Buchs noch nicht veröffentlicht waren, werden so gegen Kritik immunisiert, denn sie sollen ja nur als Beispiel dienen. (Ob unveröffentlichte Studien überhaupt als Lehrbuchbeispiele – jedenfalls als solche für erfolgreiche Forschung – taugen, sei einmal dahingestellt.) Wenn dann aber ohne Beleg Trends wie ein Abbau „institutioneller Kinderbetreuungsangebote" postuliert werden (S. 141), aus denen sich dann ein „allgemeines Interesse an den informellen Hilfsressourcen von Müttern" „ableiten" soll, stellt sich doch die Frage nach der empirischen wie argumentativen Legitimierung solcher Behauptungen.

Die Hagener Studientexte sollen – ihrem eigenen Anspruch zufolge – „mit einer verständlichen Sprache und mit einer unaufdringlichen, aber lenkenden Didaktik zum eigenen Studium anregen" (S. 2). Für Anfänger sicher ganz unverständliche Textteile zu „lorenz-konsistenten Maßen" (S. 38) und „LAG-Sequenzanalysen" (S. 67) erwecken aber den Eindruck des Versuchs über Rätselhaftigkeit zu motivieren, einer im Kontext soziologischer Theorievermittlung traditionell durchaus erfolgreichen Strategie. Dass den Studierenden zum Nachschlagen ein Verzeichnis inhaltlicher Stichworte fehlen dürfte, stellt einen weiteren Mangel dieses gut gemeinten Bandes dar, der Studierende weder zur Durchführung eigener Sozialstrukturanalysen befähigen dürfte noch solide Grundlagen in der Interpretation sozialstruktureller Daten vermittelt.

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Christian Fleck, 2007: Transatlantische Bereicherungen. Zur Erfindung der empirischen Sozialforschung. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp. ISBN-10: 3518294237 ISBN-13: 978-3518294239, 578 Seiten, 18 EUR.

Philanthropic foundations endowed by entrepreneurs who made enormous fortunes in business and industry are a peculiarity of the United States, and none played a greater role in the advancement of science than the Rockefeller Foundation (RF), established in 1913 by the enormously wealthy founder of the Standard Oil Corporation. The purpose of the RF was to "promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world" and among others, to examine the causes of social problems and cure them at their source. It supported generously higher education and research in the U.S., most notably the founding of the University of Chicago, established the first schools of public health (Harvard and Johns Hopkins), funded research for a vaccine to prevent yellow fever, programs in maternal health, contraception and sex education, the development of the social sciences, and later the 'green revolution'. Moreover, it was an international philanthropy, e.g. it funded the first modern medical school in China in 1921, the Peking Union Medical College. My aunt Ilma Oberschall who later became a founder of the Freedom Party in 1945 in Hungary headed a RF program in rural health in the late 1930s in Hungary and Transylvania. In 1921 the RF started an international fellowship program to train

scholars; by 2000 there had been 13,000 Rockefeller Fellows. In the 1930's the RF helped many German and Austrian scholars and intellectuals relocate, among others Thomas Mann, Claude Levi-Strauss and Leo Szilard.

Christian Fleck's topic are the contrast between German and U.S. universities' openness for social science research and innovation, the activities of the RF and especially the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund (which merged with the RF in 1928 and had a social science focus) on behalf of German and Austrian social science in the interwar years, and the opportunity for social scientists, in particular those that defined themselves as 'sociologists', to emigrate to the United States following the Nazi seizure of power, establish careers there, and innovate in empirical sociology. Although the relocation story has been told by prominent émigré scholars in their biographies and by historians focusing on distinguished scientists, Fleck believes that his archival research at foundations, universities and in the private papers of scholars provides a fuller and unbiased account of German and Austrian sociology in the interwar years and shortly after the war. He describes the social science program of the RF in Germany and Austria, puts together a 'collective biography' of some 800 German language social scientists, analyzes the accomplishments and career of the émigrés, contrasts the 'movers' with the 'stayers', and presents two case studies of émigré research in the U.S., both receiving some RF financing, Paul Lazarsfeld's Princeton Radio Research Project of 1937-41 and the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research's Studies in Prejudice, which culminated with the influential The *Authoritarian Personality* (1950).

At the turn of the 19/20 century many U.S. social scientists and historians studied at German universities and returned to establish graduate education and PhD programs on a scale unimagined in Europe. Because of the rapid expansion of youth attending colleges and the founding of new universities, there was steady demand for college teachers and post-doctoral programs for recruiting them to leading institutions. Several professors in the same field and department were established, and team work was expected between them and between senior and junior faculty. The model in the social sciences was the University of Chicago and its Local Community Research Committee, generously funded by the RF. Chicago was the immigrant megacity par excellence in the 1910s and 1920s and inspired Robert Park to refer to it as a 'social laboratory'. American sociology became an established social science because its subject matter was the adjustment, acculturation and assimilation of European migrants (many rural) to American cities, industry and way of life. Moreover, U.S. sociologists did not have a socialist political disposition. The American professorate accepted capitalism and democracy and shared the 'social progress through science' ideology of the business elite that endowed the foundations, and of their philanthropy administrators. It is because social science was expanding and open to newcomers that the European émigrés of the 1930's were successfully absorbed as social scientists, which they would not have been able to accomplish in Germany and Austria, even without Nazism.

At RF, Beardsley Ruml directed huge funds to European scholars and institutions through the European fellows program and funding books, journals, and staff for research centers and sent American fellows to study in Germany. The foundation administrators cultivated academic links in Europe and were persistently looking for promising scholars and projects to support. In Germany, recipients were the Hamburg Institut für Auswärtige Politik and the Kieler Institut für Weltwirtschaft. After the

Nazi regime most of the Kieler RF fellows emigrated and the RF trustees stopped funding the institutes. In Austria, the Buhlers and most of the other RF fellows emigrated after 1938. Altogether the RF helped 17 Austrian and 53 German former social science fellows between 1929 and 1941 emigrate for political reasons, including Albert Hirschman, Jakob Marschak, Fritz Machlup, Paul Lazarsfeld, and Leo Strauss. That was a huge gain for the U.S. and a loss to Germany and Austria.

Fleck devotes a long chapter and a lot of research to a collective portrait of some eight hundred German language social scientists, ranks them on productivity, visibility, and recognition based on citations and other criteria, and compares their career paths, émigrés versus stayers, Germans versus Austrians, birth cohorts, men versus women. I did not find this material particularly useful because Fleck does not connect it to the creation and establishment of social science. It is good to know that Karl Popper and Friedrich Hayek scored high (sixth and seventh) on reputation, but it in no way explains their extraordinary cross disciplinary and international influence on twentieth century social science. Similarly, the story of Lazarsfeld at the Office of Radio Research, which at some time or another involved the RF, Frank Stanton at CBS, Hadley Cantril at Princeton, public opinion polling, market research, Theodor Adorno in his guise as 'music expert' and some others, focuses on the minute details of their interpersonal relations without providing an understanding of how mass communications as a quantitative social science field got started. Fleck centers the story on how *Radio and The Printed Page* (1940) was finally published, yet the *Language of Social Research* (1955), the core text of the Lazarsfeld school of methodology, reprints only three pages out of 590 from it. Lazarsfeld and Adorno had a polar opposite conception about human choice and how to study it that could not be reconciled. Lazarsfeld made choice central to his lifelong ambition to create the empirical study of action, whether it be consumer choice, political choice, occupation choice, choice of residence, choice of spouse. The actor has dispositions which interact with influences, some from his social milieu, some from exposure to mass media, that solidifies intentions into a choice. The process could be studied quantitatively using repeated interviews and observations with the same persons, called the panel method. This was a genuine innovation in social science and first tried in the now classic *The People's Choice* (1944). Adorno on the other hand denied human agents real choice in a capitalist mass society that manipulated their mentality, and eleven years in the U.S. did not shake this conviction. One cannot build methodological individualism from such a foundation. Despite Lazarsfeld's multiple efforts to include Adorno in his research projects and get them funded by the RF, these two lived on different social science planets, as Fleck makes clear.

Similarly the chapter on the Frankfurt Institute and the Studies in Prejudice research in New York, Los Angeles and Berkeley in cooperation with some U.S. social scientists is full of interpersonal detail – intrigue is actually a better word to describe some of the material – but lacks a bridge to the book's subtitle "Zur Erfindung der Empirischen Sozialforschung." There are some intriguing loose ends. Horkheimer hypothesized that antisemites were not a group with a distinct personality type, as many of the researchers thought, and that under some circumstances all persons were at some risk of becoming anti-semitic. This is similar to the contemporary controversy over what sorts of people become suicide bombers, terrorists, war criminals, and torturers. Why did not Horkheimer's views prevail? It would have resulted in a different research instrument to measure intolerance and anti-

semitism for the "Authoritarian Personality" and could have stimulated an innovative political psychology.

Although well written and researched, the book is too long with 580 pages. One ends up learning about a lot of people that are not particularly noteworthy. There are some omissions. For instance, table 6.1 on page 355 lists more than twenty prominent German writers and books on totalitarianism and related topics (Hannah Arendt, Joseph Schumpeter, Franz Neumann, etc). Most are political and philosophic treatises. Unmentioned is the classic *From Democracy to Nazism* (1945), by the émigré Rudolf Heberle, which was the first empirical (as opposed to philosophical) account of the rise of the Nazi party and regime and which I studied with great profit as a student, and later used in my lectures and writings on the rise of Nazism.

Whatever its shortcomings, the book tells a remarkable story, only partially known and somewhat sanitized in autobiographical accounts, of successful transnational cooperation in social science which, despite the human frailties of the protagonists, led to pioneering work and innovation.

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